

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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FOR AMBASSADOR BUNKER

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 00570 ACTION WASHDC INFO AMMAN BEIRUT
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TAGS: PFOR, EG, XF, SY, US, UR

SUBJECT: SADAT'S INTERVIEW WITH AL-NAHAR

REF CAIRO 412

1. IN THIRD IMPORTANT INTERVIEW WITHIN SPACE OF TEN DAYS,
SADAT DISCUSSED EGYPT'S FOREIGN POLICY WITH AL-NAHAR'S GHASSAN
TWEINI. ACCORDING TO CAIRO PRESS JAN 17, PRESIDENT HIGHLIGHTED
THREE ISSUES:

A. PARTIAL SOLUTION. PRESIDENT SAID HE WILL ACCEPT NOTHING
LESS THAN ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL ON ALL THREE FRONTS WITHIN NEXT
THREE MONTHS. THIS IS DECISIVE YEAR BECAUSE 1976 IS ELECTION
YEAR IN US. IF NOTHING IS ACCOMPLISHED "VERY SOON", ALL ARABS,
INCLUDING PALESTINIANS, WILL GO TO GENEVA AND "EXPLODE EVERYTHING
THERE". PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT "IT WOULD BE
TREASON TO REFUSE TO TAKE BACK OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY WHICH
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ENEMY MIGHT RETURN".

B. ISRAELI ATTACK ON SYRIA. IF ISRAEL ATTACKS SYRIA, EGYPT WILL IMMEDIATELY STEP IN, ND USG KNOWS IT.

C. PLO/GOE. THERE IS AND CAN BE NO "CONTRADICTION" BETWEEN EGYPT AND PALESTINIANS. AVOIDING DIRECT CRITICISM OF PLO'S RECENT "CAMPAIGN OF DOUBT" (SEE REFTEL), PRESIDENT MERELY NOTED THAT "RESPONSIBLE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP IS CALLED ON TO GIVE PEACEFUL EFFORTS IN NEXT STAGE EVERY CHANCE". ACCORDING TO TWEINI, PRESIDENT HAS ADVISED PALESTINIANS TO BE PATIENT.

2. COMMENTING ON GOE RELATIONS WITH SUPERPOWERS, PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY NOTED EGYPT IS NON-ALIGNED AND REFUSES TO BE PART OF ANY COUNTRY'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE. HE ADDED, SIGNIFICANTLY: "IF SOVIETS WANT TO MAINTAIN THEIR IMAGE IN ARAB WORLD, THEY SHOULD HONOR THEIR COMMITMENTS UNDER EGYPT/SOVIET TREATY."

3. COMMENT: IT IS APPARENT THAT PRESIDENT SADAT CLEARLY INTENDED THIS INTERVIEW TO SERVE AS A COUNTER ATTACK AGAINST PLO ANTI-GOE FOREIGN POLICY "CAMPAIGN", EVEN THOUGH HE DID NOT REFER TO IT DIRECTLY. HIS REPORTED INSISTANCE ON ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL ON ALL THREE FRONTS AIMS DIRECTLY AT ACCUSATION OF GOE INTENTION ARRANGE SEPARATE DEAL WITH ISRAEL.
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